

1. Convene the meeting.

Chairman Campbell convened the meeting at 7PM with the following members present: Lionel Ingram, Paul Binette, Joseph Pace, Robert Eastman and Town Manager George Olson. During introductions, a contingent of VFW, American Legion & Auxiliary members stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Minutes of Selectmen's meeting of September 13, 2004.

***Mr. Pace moved to waive the reading of the minutes and to accept them as submitted; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: Unanimous.***

3. Sale of Town Property – 20 Beech Hill Mobile Home Park

Mr. Olson reported no bids were received for this property taken for back taxes and asked the Board to pass on this item.

4. Bid openings: (see attached bid sheet)

Town Report: Six bids were received for the 2004 (Year ending) Town Report. ***Mr. Eastman moved to refer the bids to the Town Manager and his Assistant and to return with a recommendation; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.***

Captain's Meadow Paving: Only one bid was received. ***Mr. Eastman moved to proceed with opening the sole bid as it was received from the firm currently handling the Town's paving; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.*** Mr. Olson explained the funds will be drawn from the Letter of Credit received a year ago from the developer. ***Mr. Pace moved to award the bid to Bell & Flynn for \$53,975 following review by the Engineer and Town Manager approval, and not wait until the next Selectmen's meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup> for bid award; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: Unanimous.***

5. Downtown Restoration Committee – Round a bout test

Sylvia Von Aulock, Town Planner, reported that with Hurricane Jeanne causing havoc in Florida, Michael Wallwork (Mr. Roundabout) was unable to be present this evening and tomorrow's workshop has been cancelled. The 3-week test has also been cancelled and not yet rescheduled. She thanked Public Works, Police and all the volunteers in creating the test this past Sunday, as well as those who drove around to identify issues during the test.

Ms. von Aulock noted the Committee expected confusion (which they got), hence why the Police and volunteers were there to answer questions. Trucks maneuvered; Fire trucks maneuvered, including the ladder, ambulance and a pumper, and identified pinch points.

Rueben Hall, Engineer for the project, also thanked the Fire Department for their input. He noted Mr. Wallwork would offer opinions, good and bad, and ideas on how to fix those areas 'not working'.

Mr. Hall noted the purpose of the test was to put the substantial models, software data, etc., in reality to see if it accomplished what it was proposed to do. The test simulated peak hour traffic and he feels

the level of service was equal to an A (grading based on lines and time in traffic). Some of the 'legs' of the round a bout, received B level grades. The current situation in the downtown area ranges from an A to F, with "A" equal to free flow with little delay. He noted all round a bout designs are site specific, as no two areas the same. This was the first hurdle for Exeter. His assessment was the test was a tremendous success from a technical standpoint. He noted only 3 cones, inside the circle, toppled but felt that was operator error as it occurred with a rental truck. Other large vehicles (fire, DPW, etc.) had no problem with turning. Unfortunately, no tractor trailers came through till 10 minutes after breakdown of cones.

Mr. Hall noted he met with Al Lampert (Al's Automotive) re tow trucks w/vehicles behind. They will do a field test with him in a separate lot with measurements equal to those at the Bandstand during the test. He also noted a rescue unit proceeded through town with ten cars in line. All moved out of the way with no problem.

During the test, the parking impact was not determined as the cones and striping were not conducive to parking. During the 3-week test, the spaces would be lined out. A new review of the plan shows a net loss less than the original 19. The test identified deficiencies, with most being confusion with drivers not knowing where to go, not with the design. There was confusion of signs and police officers -- usually both are not present. In the final design test, no officer will be in the road at the round a bout. Drivers were stopping to ask questions and an informal survey was occurring in the center. A number of people said it was the worst seen and don't do it, all the while moving freely.

Mr. Hall noted the Committee meets Tuesday to reconsider the plan. He offered to take questions from the Board and public. Chairman Campbell asked to keep questions short due to the full agenda.

Mr. Pace noted he received many comments with not much for a positive benefit and he is not sure why we are doing this. The one-day test was done and, though many are trying to stay open minded about the project, many do not want the change.

Mr. Binette stated he asked questions of drivers on Sunday but was not sure he was holding up traffic to do so. There were lots of tourists in Town on Sunday and they made their way through many side roads, only to end up on a different road but still in the downtown area. He recommends a test be performed on a Friday between 3 & 6 PM and not on a Sunday. He noted drivers were confused and were not sure whether to stop or not, particularly with an officer present. The officer was viewing the situation and was there when problems developed. He noted no one wanted to yield, particularly from Water to Front Streets, all jammed into one lane. He received many phone calls today -- in the negative.

Mr. Eastman agreed with Mr. Pace and we should put the plans in a bottom drawer and lock it.

Dick DeMasky, Old Town Farm Road, stated he was born here and has dealt with the Bandstand since he was 16. The stop sign is the best thing ever done, giving time to turn around the Bandstand to Water Street. The Bandstand is 75% on Front Street and now allows a straight shot on Water. With the plan, 19 spaces are out, all the while people are screaming about a parking garage. If the garage was unsuitable on Linden Street for the School area, then it's also unsuitable on Water Street. He noted the tax money is being spent on experts not from Exeter. The Board members live here and know the problems. "Don't fix it if it's not broke".

Arthur Baillargeon, Tremont Street, watched the test prior to driving into it. He expressed great concern of pedestrian safety, particularly by the Town Hall crossing Water Street. There is currently a stop sign, but with a yield, pedestrian safety is an issue. And, during the next test, the yield signs should be triple in size.

***Mr. Pace moved to not continue the test; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: Unanimous.*** Mr. Campbell noted he is bothered by the isolation of the Bandstand, with it becoming a monument rather than a civic place with access.

6. Request to address the Board – Richard McGraw.

Alan Bailey, Green Street, read a letter from Mr. McGraw asking Mr. Bailey to speak on his behalf as he is recuperating from a hospital stay and his cardiologists recommended not attending. They certainly agreed.

Mr. Bailey stated Mr. McGraw had requested the Board start their meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Board's response to Mr. McGraw was negative with some reasons stated. He noted the discussions were not made in a public session. Many service groups were present this evening and he hoped the Board would listen to input. The public vs. non-public meetings is a separate issue.

Mr. Bailey stated Exeter is a "Special Place" and flags are flown, the Pledge is said at both Deliberative session and Town Meetings. The American Independence Museum is an attraction here and items are sold in support of our country but the Board has fallen into a situation where the Pledge is not said. The Independence celebration is two weeks after the 4<sup>th</sup>, making Exeter an even more special place. It is the heartfelt desire of many, those who have served their country or not, for the Board to use the Pledge.

Al Fogarty, President of Exeter Veteran's Council, noted the Town gives money each year to the Veteran's causes (Memorial and Veteran's Day activities) but money is not enough. If Exeter was the Revolutionary Capitol of the State in 1775, at least the Pledge to the flag, our original symbol, should be recited.

Richard Dubois, Past President of the Veteran's Council, noted he has traveled to many towns and many say the Pledge at the beginning of their meetings. Why does the Board object and not wish to say it? All their parades and meetings begin with the Pledge and National Anthem.

Arthur Baillargeon, stated there are many area school boards and they all say the Pledge but our Selectmen do not.

David Lyman, VFW, stated the respect and honor for the flag only takes 15 seconds of a meeting.

***Mr. Eastman moved for this Board to adopt reciting the Pledge of Allegiance after convening of their meetings; second by Mr. Binette.***

Mr. Ingram stated he is a Veteran, having served 34 years. In the three years he has been on the Board, the Pledge has not been recited and does not see a good reason to do so. Patriotism, to him, is individual. He values each veteran and expects to be valued by them, not walked out on (a Veteran

left during this time). He gave an oath of office to serve in this capacity. He does not show patriotism here – he does by service, and prefers not to change the procedure here.

Harry Fountas, Adjutant, Post 32, asked if they would do away with the anthem at sporting events? Mr. Ingram stated no.

Mr. Binette noted he was with the Marines for ten years and has relatives with the Legion. He is very patriotic with ribbons and flags being shown. It is not a matter of the Pledge being said here or not. He noted there is no pledge recited on Memorial Day when the flag is at half staff. Mr. Fogarty noted the Pledge is not cited when the flag is at half, as this is a mourning for the dead. The Pledge is, however, recited on Memorial Day at Gale Park. If the State House and Senate, US Congress and Senate all say the Pledge at the beginning of their meetings, it's sad a 'lower' government (with no disrespect for what the Board does) can't do it.

Mr. Pace stated this is not about showing patriotism because there is no need to. Reciting the Pledge and love of country means more to him on special occasions – thinking of the words and not the business to be taken up at a meeting. Reciting more often, the words often become meaningless. He will proudly recite the Pledge if the Board so decides, but he feels it's more appropriate at other times to do so.

Gerry Carter noted it was not a matter of patriotism, but respect for the flag. Mr. Dubois apologized to the Board for the veteran who walked out, noting it was a personal view and not disrespect. He asked the Board to show support for the flag to all who fought for it and not just a show of patriotism.

Chairman Campbell noted this is an emotionally charged issue. This is a business meeting and not a patriotic show, here or other meetings with other boards.

Mr. Pace stated it is a sad commentary if people should respectfully disagree with something be referred to as left-wing dirt bags or the like. He feels it is offensive to sell magnets of flags for cars, or wear on clothing and, according to the code of ethics, this is not allowed unless as part of a uniform. How is the board not reciting the Pledge demeaning to the flag and those things are not? There is a love of country but if someone disagrees with the country, it does not mean they are less American. Mr. Binette relates this to religion in schools. You can't force someone to recite the prayers. His colleagues are upset they are being told to do something. He feels it is not protocol at a business meeting. ***VOTE: 1, 3, with Mr. Binette abstaining.***

7. Request to address the Board – Captains Meadow Homeowners Association.

Ken Schleicher, 6 Captains Meadows, Treasurer of the Homeowners Association, thanked the Board and Jennifer Perry (Town Engineer) for their assistance and persistence in continuing the project. He asked if all items listed in the bond will be completed. Mr. Olson noted there are funds remaining in the letter of credit to cover the paving but a comparison between the bid and what's available will be done. If funds remain, other items on the list will be completed. Mr. Schleicher asked on a timeline. Ms. Perry noted the paving bid calls for completion by November 15<sup>th</sup>. The project should begin within a couple of weeks and barring any weather situations, it should be completed on time. She will confirm with Bell & Flynn and contact Mr. Schleicher. He noted if all works, he may not see the Board again.

8. Request to address Board – Dennis Tewksbury, E & H Cooperative Manufact.. Home Park – CDBG Grant.

Mr. Tewksbury has been retained by the Cooperative to prepare a CDBG Feasibility Study Grant application for \$12,000. He explained there are 53 units in the Park with slopes to the west to wetlands at Route 101 and the Park was built over a campground that, at the time, had an infrastructure that consisted of fiber-type piping. The grants are awarded by the NH Community Development Finance Authority with the prime recipient being the municipality. The Study Grant will create a Plan which is then presented to the lending agencies. The Cooperative will prepare the legal notice for the public hearing, and costs to place the ad. If the Selectmen approve sponsorship of the application, they must hold the hearing and provide minutes of same, with the application submitted by the Town before October 30<sup>th</sup>. The Town must also provide a Displacement & Relocation Plan, along with the Housing & Community Development Plan.

***Mr. Pace moved to schedule a Public Hearing for October 18<sup>th</sup>, with posting as such, for public input and to decide whether to support the application or not, along with appointing the Town Manager as the Town's agent; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: Unanimous.***

9. Preliminary 2005 Budget discussion.

In reference to the Town Manager's memo indicating an estimated 12% increase from the default budget of this year (attached to 9/13/04 minutes), Mr. Campbell noted it is still a 6.6% increase over the budget that was proposed prior to the default being accepted. He feels the 12%, which makes up those things cut, is too high and, in order to avoid another default budget being voted in, recommends a hard look at possible cuts and to come in with a single digit increase.

Mr. Olson noted this is the time to ask questions and quiz the Manager and Department Heads (present in audience), making any changes prior to sending the budget package to the Budget Committee. He had three changes prior to discussion:

- p. 17 #2418 "Planning Studies", should read \$10,000, an increase of \$5,000.
- p. 39 #2705 "Library Custodial", should read \$15,000, a decrease of \$1,747, noting the Library Trustees had not approved the budget by the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting when this preliminary request was received by the Board.
- p. 40 #2739 "Council on Aging", should increase to \$650, an increase of \$300, as there is no guarantee the AARP will provide the \$300 they customarily do. If they do provide it, the \$300 will not be expended.

Mr. Pace stated that his first year serving (2000), the first default budget was being used, with the desire to make the budget look smaller, items were taken from the budget and presented as warrant articles to give voters the opportunity to express themselves and desires on what to expend tax dollars. After this, items were then added to the budget and away from the warrant article practice which, in turn, makes the budget look larger. Perhaps we've gone too far in seeking that balance of inclusive vs. warrant articles. Some things may be better as warrant articles (big ticket items) with voter discussions at the deliberative session. He has some to discuss.

Mr. Eastman agreed with Mr. Campbell and suggested sending the budget back to the Town Manager to return with a 6.5% increase vs. the 12%. Mr. Olson can meet with the Department Heads to get their view on what could be cut. Mr. Campbell suggested hearing discussion this evening on why projects are being presented. The BudCom could then look more closely at each item.

Ms. von Aulock explained the \$5000 increase was an oversight and requested it be added to continue the downtown restoration project, to date handled via volunteers but was not sure that would continue.

Mr. Ingram suggested hearing from the department heads first concerning their requests. Mr. Pace suggested they rise to defend any action the Board may suggest. He stated it is not known what the voters want, as it appears the infrastructure has suffered the last couple of years. Mr. Binette noted voters do not see line items, only the full budget. He will reserve his remarks till after the sub-committees meet with department heads and present their recommendations to the full budget committee.

Mr. Campbell was most concerned with the personnel additions noting the I-T person, alone, includes \$37,000 with an additional amount from water & sewer budgets. Mr. Olson urged support of this, noting meetings with department heads have expressed a great need for this position. Jack Sheehy, Finance Director, stated the need and desire of Departments to fund the position at \$49,500 for the first year, which includes a half year of salary, providing office items, etc. Additional funds will be required the second year. Besides handling computer issues, the person will also handle coordination of phones, networks, CIP for computer replacement, etc. Currently, computer problems are attempted to be handled in-house or there is down-time awaiting repair from outside sources.

Patrolman: Chief Rich Kane stated this was originally scheduled for '04, with the sub-committee and full BudCom agreeing but the default budget lost it. There are no changes: we have increased population, traffic and situations, with 800 calls over '03 to date. Present standards call for 24 certified officers for Exeter: we do not have. The second officer is a Sergeant's position, also on the plan for '04. The department is currently not manned with a road supervisor 24/7, which is a concern for liability of the Town. We are short 21% of the time with no supervisor on shift — and this is not because of vacation or sick leave.

Part-time Clerk, Town Clerk's Office: Linda Hartson, Town Clerk stated current staff (2 FT besides herself, and 1 PT Clerks) attempts to handle increased population, cars, numbers voting, requests for vital records — increased services all around. With the added workload, filing is way behind and regular duties are not being done. A part-time clerk would alleviate that burden. Mr. Binette also requested another voting machine be added to her budget (\$7000) as two will not handle the count, particularly if one goes down.

Mr. Pace stated he sympathizes with departments but thought the Board should do some work to send a budget to the BudCom to avoid some open warfare, and request some areas as warrant articles.

Brian Comeau, Fire Chief, is again requesting a Fire Prevention Inspector. The position is currently being handled with 6 hours per week, some PT/some OT by a firefighter, which is limited. He is currently working on protection with multi-family dwellings and is 95% complete to get residences up to current standards. The Assistant Chief currently handles new construction. Mr. Eastman thought the department should hire 4 more firefighters, to save OT. Chief Comeau welcomed that but is having enough trouble getting an inspector on staff, let alone 4 more positions.

Mr. Eastman questioned #2464 "Interest on TAN" with \$50,000 budgeted every year for tax anticipation notes, which we don't use, as we have semi-annual tax collection. Mr. Olson stated this was upon recommendation of the Treasurer in case a collapse in the economy sees many individuals

not paying their taxes. The Town collects all taxes, for school and county also, and we must pay them. Mr. Pace asked if part of the \$500,000 fund balance we have each year could legally be expended for TAN's, instead of budgeting for them each year. Mr. Olson will check.

Mr. Pace suggested the following become warrant articles:

*Recreation Center Maintenance* (#2276, p. 18): \$41,800, which includes \$38,000 for roof repair.  
*Town Hall Maintenance* (#2297 p. 18): \$77,800, including \$10,000 for stage flooring, \$45,000 for fire-rated/stairwell, and \$6500 for court carpeting. **Mr. Pace moved to place \$61,500 of Town Hall Maintenance in warrant articles; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: Unanimous. Mr. Pace moved \$38,000 of Recreation Center Maintenance be placed in warrant articles; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: 4-1.** Mr. Campbell noted the roof repair is needed and if not passed, could lead to more problems.

*Paving* (#2582 p.29): \$260,000. Mr. Pace stated we asked for a certain amount last year and it was cut. If the budget is cut again, it will fall here. He feels the voters should be asked if they want paving. Mr. Ingram noted it continues to be a 'catch-up' program. He suggested \$170,000 be moved to warrant article, leaving the \$90,000 budgeted for this year. **Mr. Pace moved to cut the \$170,000 increase for paving from budget and place in a warrant article, leaving \$90,000 for the budgeted figure; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: 4-1.**

*Cold Planing* (#2583 p. 29): Mr. Pace moved \$60,000 to warrant article – no second.

*Dispatch Equipment* (#3595 – Capital Outlay, p. 42): \$50,000. Mr. Olson reminded the Board the bids came in too high last year, so a greater amount was budgeted this year. Chief Kane stated \$14,000 was budgeted last year but the bid was \$48,000. These are radios in cruisers and laptops to communicate with Dispatch. They can download pictures of persons wanted from other departments, use for back-up communication and when not wishing to go on radio. It includes 8 different radios and a base station. They currently are having trouble finding parts for their present systems. **Mr. Pace moved \$50,000 be removed from Dispatch Equipment to a warrant article; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: 3-2.**

*Highway Equipment Replacement* (#2548 p. 41): Of the various items, **Mr. Pace moved to remove \$77,000 for the sidewalk tractor and \$37,000 for the hotbox and place as warrant articles; second by Mr. Binette. VOTE: Unanimous.**

Total removed from budget this evening totals \$433,500 which is about 3.3% of a reduction.

Mr. Ingram asked if personnel figures for additional personnel could be separated from their salaries. He also urged the media to get the information to the voters, with sample ballots and drafts in the papers for residents to view in advance.

**Mr. Pace moved the Board of Selectmen remit the budget for 2005, as adjusted, and CIP and various warrant articles to the Budget Recommendations Committee for their review and return with recommendations; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: Unanimous.** Mr. Sheehy noted the revised budget totaled, unofficially, \$12,531,983.

10. Second reading of changes to Town's Fee Schedule.

Chairman Campbell read the changes as proposed (see attached). *Mr. Eastman moved to adopt the changes as read; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.*

11. Extension of hours at Transfer Station.

The proposed additional hours, as they were in 2003, include: Saturdays beginning at 8AM (giving one additional hour) and Sundays from 12-4PM, from October 15 through December 15<sup>th</sup>. *Mr. Pace moved to authorize the extension of hours at the Transfer Station; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: Unanimous.*

12. Appointment to Exeter River Advisory Committee.

*Mr. Ingram moved to appoint Rob Borden of Court Street, to the Committee; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.* Next meeting is this Thursday.

13. Request to use Cubie Road – Exeter Snow Hounds Inc.

The Snow Hounds are requesting formal support for their use of Cubie Road as part of their trail system until rescinded by the Selectmen. *Mr. Pace moved to approve the use of the closed Class 5 roadway (Cubie Road) by the Exeter Snow Hounds, Inc., till rescinded and to generate a letter to the State NH Bureau of Trails for confirmation; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: Unanimous.*

14. Permits:

- Use of the Town Hall for a political rally on September 28<sup>th</sup> from 9AM to 6PM (includes set-up).
- Rockingham Land Trust meeting in the Nowak Room on October 7<sup>th</sup> from 7-9PM;
- American Cancer walk on October 17<sup>th</sup> from 11-1, with route approved by Chief Kane.
- New Outlook use of the Town Hall stage for an Improv on November 19<sup>th</sup>, with practice from 3-6PM and performance from 6-10:30. They requested waiver of rental fee, with \$100 deposit for cleaning required.

*Mr. Ingram moved to approve the permits as read; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.*

15. Town Manager's Items:

- Next meeting is October 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Household Hazardous Waste Day is Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> from 8:30-12 @ DPW complex. The website has information regarding what can and cannot be accepted.
- Columbus Day, October 8<sup>th</sup>, will find all town offices closed. Rubbish & recycling WILL be on schedule with no delay.
- November 1 through 5 is fall pick-up week and \$2.50 stickers are available at the Town Office and Public Works Complex.
- Leaf collection is the week of November 15<sup>th</sup> on regular rubbish days. The appropriate leaf bags should be at curbside by 7AM.
- Our reception desk still has Bandstand medallions available and we are at the breakpoint with all proceeds now going toward the Swasey Parkway Pavilion; magnetic ribbons (large yellow and mini red-white-blue) in support of the troops are available; sample Women's Club cookbook, featuring recipes of 'famous Exonians' is on display.



- Covers of the Town Report (Gale Park monument and Old Man of the Mountain photo) are available at the Town Manager's office (no charge).
- Rockingham Visiting Nurse/Hospice will hold flu shots clinics on November 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10-12 at the Senior Center and November 9<sup>th</sup> from 10-12 at St. Michael's Church. No charge for those on Medicare; \$15 for those not.

16. Selectmen's Committee Reports:

- Mr. Pace: this past week, the Town Manager Search Committee narrowed the field from 65 candidates to 10 semi-finalists. This week, they are whittling it down to 3-5 for interviews. Later in October, visits to Town will allow residents, employees and department heads to grade the finalists.
- Mr. Ingram: The Safety Committee is commending town employees for their safe summer, noting very few incidents, with limited 'damage' and few lost hours. The EHS Re-use Committee meetings tomorrow morning and Thursday at 9AM the Exeter River Advisory Committee will meet.
- Mr. Eastman – None.
- Mr. Binette: He was to represent Mr. Campbell at the EDC meeting last week but it was cancelled.
- Mr. Campbell: None.

17. Public Comments:

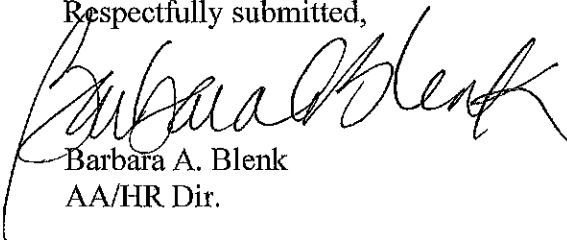
Mr. Bailey appreciated the Board's time here this evening, including the non-public session. It was noted there was no non-public session held. He asked of the bonding mechanism to fund open space land and where that stood. Mr. Olson noted the Committee just submitted their request for \$1 million and this will go to the Treasurer Tuesday to initiate the process to borrow funds. He solicits costs and will return to the Board on the 18<sup>th</sup> with his bid recommendations.

Mr. Bailey asked where the Lincoln Street drainage project stood, with \$40,000 raised last year and \$40,000 raised again this year. Mr. Olson noted the project is complete and bills paid. The remaining balance goes to the fund balance.

Mr. Bailey asked what the fund balance was and if the auditor's report was available. Mr. Olson expects it soon and it will be discussed on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The amount is not yet available though he has been contacting the auditors. The report is very late this year.

***Mr. Pace moved to adjourn; second by Mr. Ingram. VOTE: Unanimous. Time: 9:53PM.***

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara A. Blenk  
AA/HR Dir.

attach.